

March 7, 1978

LB 902

SENATOR DUIS: We will now take up 902. Senator Merz, are you ready? Senator Schmit....Senator Kremer, would you punch Merz on the back there. 902, Senator Merz.

CLERK: Mr. President, the first motion that I have then is offered by....well first of all there are E & R amendments, Mr. President, that need to be adopted.

SENATOR STONEY: Mr. President, I move the E & R amendments to LB 902 be adopted.

SENATOR DUIS: In favor signify by saying aye. Those opposed. The amendments are accepted.

CLERK: Mr. President, I now have a motion by Senator Chambers to strike the enacting clause.

SENATOR DUIS: Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman, members of the Legislature. This is a bad bill. The credibility quotient of the officials in Omaha is zero. They have mislead the Legislature, they have withheld information. I think in some instances they have told out right falsehoods. I will go right down the list and I'm going to go back to Mayor Leahy, former Mayor Leahy, who is asking the Legislature for a city sales tax. He came down here saying Omaha needs $\frac{1}{2}\%$ but allow 1% just in case. The Legislature authorized the 1% thinking that $\frac{1}{2}\%$ would be levied and shortly thereafter the City Council levied a full 1% sales tax. At this time that this 1% sales tax was levied there was very poor fiscal policy in the city. Mayor Edward Zorinsky told me, to my face, that when he took over from Mayor Leahy the city's financial condition was in shambles. That was his word "shambles". He said it would take him, he didn't know how long just to sort things out and get the city running in a rational fashion. So then he takes over and by "he" I mean present Senator Zorinsky, former Mayor Zorinsky. He told the people always we don't want to do this because it is taking dollars out of the tax payers pockets. So, they would not offer raises as they should have. They left the streets fall into disrepair, and if you drive through Omaha you may fall into one of the holes that result from the city streets having fallen into disrepair. They have had on occasion surpluses from snow removal funds and the word is out that some of that has been transferred here and there and it is difficult to tell exactly where but somebody who is doing some inquiring should do some checking into it to find out why. So, when the first sales tax was levied in Omaha it was done with some degree of misrepresentation. Omaha used to have a two dollar wheel tax, Senator Venditte, then there was a large snow and they were going to have a one shot increase of five dollars. A one shot. The wheel tax in Omaha is now eight dollars. I guess that it is going to stay that until they decide to raise it more. So another instance of one thing being told and something else being done. When this bill, 902, was brought to the Legislature there were attempts by Senator Newell and others to get information from the city. The information continued to be dribbled out in bits and pieces. Just enough like the carrot to keep the Legislature trodding on the path that the city officials wanted the Legislature to trod on and then they would sit back in Omaha and laugh. The Legislature was running through its paces and about to be

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